

8-31-98

FACT SHEET

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT INTEGRATED URBAN AIR TOXICS STRATEGY

TODAY'S ACTION

- ◆ The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is releasing a draft integrated urban air toxics strategy for public comment. The draft strategy presents a broad framework for addressing air toxics in urban areas. Air toxics, which are also known as hazardous air pollutants, are those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health or environmental effects.
- ◆ The draft strategy builds on the substantial emission reductions EPA, and state and local governments have already achieved from cars, trucks, fuels, and industries such as chemical plants and dry cleaners.
- ◆ The draft strategy outlines actions to reduce emissions of air toxics and to improve EPA's understanding of risks posed by air toxics in urban areas. It includes a draft list for public comment of the air toxics that present the greatest threat to public health in the largest number of urban areas. It also lists categories of area sources that emit air toxics and could be subject to emission standards and includes a workplan to develop these and other actions in the future to substantially reduce risks from air toxics in urban areas from all sources.
- ◆ The draft strategy relies on collaborative relationships with State and local agencies, environmental justice communities, and affected industries to assure the actions are responsive to health concerns while promoting fairness, encouraging urban redevelopment, and minimizing regulatory burden.
- ◆ The draft strategy does not have any direct regulatory consequences. It presents the basis for EPA's identification of pollutants and source categories, and plans for further actions to address risks to public health in urban areas.
- ◆ After holding stakeholder meetings and evaluating public comments, EPA intends to issue the final integrated urban air toxics strategy along with a report to Congress on the status of the air toxics strategy by June 18, 1999.

BACKGROUND

- ◆ Under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, EPA is required to regulate sources of 188 listed toxic air pollutants. (Note that this list originally contained 189 pollutants, but EPA has subsequently removed the chemical caprolactam from the list.) On July 16, 1992, EPA published a list of industrial source categories that emit one or more of these air toxics.

For listed categories of “major” sources (those that emit 10 tons/year or more of a listed pollutant or 25 tons/year or more of a combination of pollutants), the Clean Air Act requires EPA to develop standards that require the application of stringent air pollution controls, known as maximum achievable control technology (MACT).

- ◆ Under the Clean Air Act of 1990, EPA has issued standards that will reduce air toxics emissions from "stationary" sources by over one million tons per year -- almost 10 times greater reductions than were achieved in the previous 20 years. These standards affect about 50 categories of major industries, such as chemical plants, oil refineries, aerospace manufacturers, and steel mills.
- ◆ In addition, EPA has substantially reduced emissions of air toxics, such as lead and benzene, and other pollutants through national standards for fuels, cars and trucks. For example, EPA has issued tighter emission standards for cars and trucks, standards to reduce air toxics and other emissions that occur when vehicles are refueled, and standards for substantially cleaner gasoline.
- ◆ Although existing programs have already achieved substantial emission reductions from these types of sources, preliminary data indicates that there will be significant remaining air toxics problems for some pollutants in urban areas. Air toxics can pose special threats in urban areas because of the concentrations of people and sources of emissions. Consequently, EPA plans to supplement the existing air toxics regulatory program with risk-based goals for human health and environmental quality, and to create a coordinated framework of regulatory, technical and administrative actions to meet these goals.

WHAT ARE THE KEY COMPONENTS OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY?

- ◆ The draft strategy focuses on: 1) defining the air toxics threat for urban areas through a comprehensive approach considering major, areas, and mobile sources; 2) continuing to improve EPA’s understanding of the risks from air toxics in urban areas through additional research and monitoring; 3) continuing to reduce risks from urban air toxics through near and long-term actions; and 4) developing stronger partnerships with state and local governments to develop urban strategies for their communities.
- ◆ The draft strategy identifies 33 air toxics that EPA believes pose the greatest threat to public health in urban areas (Note that these 33 air toxics are a subset of the 188 pollutants EPA targets in its existing air toxics program). Based on an analysis of smaller, so-called "area sources" that contribute to the emissions of 30 of these air toxics, EPA also developed a list of 34 types of "area sources," such as hospital sterilizers, which may be subject to new emission standards. The goal of this portion of the strategy is to ensure that 90% of the "area source" emissions of these air toxics are addressed through EPA’s established air toxics program.

- ◆ The draft strategy also provides EPA's schedule for further assessing the public health risk from air toxics from mobile sources, and details the schedule for decisions by EPA on the need for additional motor vehicle emission or fuel standards.

WHY DOES THE STRATEGY FOCUS ON URBAN AREAS?

- ◆ In urban areas, air toxics can pose special threats because of the concentrations of people and sources of emissions. Urban areas have a variety of sources of air toxics, including cars and trucks, large factories, and smaller entities like gasoline stations and dry cleaners. While individually these sources may not be large contributors to the air toxics problem, when combined they can potentially pose significant health threats.
- ◆ Although EPA and state and local governments have already achieved substantial emission reductions from many sources of air toxics, preliminary data indicate that there will be significant remaining air toxics problems for some pollutants in urban areas.
- ◆ EPA is also concerned that because minority and low income communities are often located close to urban industrial and commercial areas where ambient concentrations of air toxics may be greater, their risks of exposure to air toxics may be disproportionately higher than for other segments of the population. EPA intends to collect and evaluate additional information needed to determine the extent to which there may be disproportionate risks for these communities in urban areas.

HOW DID EPA INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY?

- ◆ In September 1997, EPA provided an emissions inventory of 40 compounds for public comment through an EPA Internet website which is dedicated to air toxics issues. EPA used this emissions inventory to refine the data on candidate air toxics that are believed to pose the greatest threat to public health in urban areas.
- ◆ EPA also contacted a variety of representatives from trade organizations, industry and environmental advocacy groups to announce the availability of the emissions inventory and to request their review. Their feedback was used in shaping the draft strategy.
- ◆ In addition, EPA held a series of meetings with State, local and territorial agencies, to request their input on the development of the strategy, particularly on the development of the State and local elements. EPA also participated in a number of separate meetings with various industry and small business representatives to encourage their input in the strategy.

HOW DOES EPA PLAN TO SOLICIT FURTHER INPUT ON THE DRAFT

STRATEGY?

- ◆ EPA is providing 90 days for the public to comment on the draft strategy. The Agency intends to fully analyze and integrate, where appropriate, these comments before issuing the final strategy in June 1999.
- ◆ During the 90 day public comment period, EPA will hold four stakeholder meetings to obtain input from states, industry, environmental justice groups, and environmental groups: Washington D.C. on September 23, 1998; Research Triangle Park, NC on September 29, 1998; Chicago, IL on November 5-6, 1998 and San Francisco, CA on November 19, 1998.

WHAT IS THE PROJECTED TIMELINE FOR ISSUING REGULATIONS UNDER THE STRATEGY?

<u>Year</u>	<u>Action</u>
1999	After assessing emission reductions achieved since 1990, EPA would propose any additional regulations targeting air toxics emissions from cars, trucks, and other "mobile sources" and would finalize these rules in 2000 after addressing public comments.
2001	EPA would propose seventeen new "area source" regulations which would be finalized in 2002 after addressing public comments, and would become effective in 2005.
2003	EPA would propose nine additional "area source" regulations which would be finalized in 2004 after addressing public comments, and would become effective in 2007.
2005	EPA would propose the remaining eight "area source" regulations which would be finalized in 2006 after addressing public comments, and would become effective in 2009.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ◆ Anyone with Internet access can obtain the Federal Register notice and the background documentation from EPA's web site on the Internet under "recent actions" at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg>. It is also available through EPA's Air and Radiation Docket and Information Center (Docket Number A-97-44) by calling (202) 260-7548 or FAX (202) 260-4000 (a reasonable fee may be charged for copying). For technical questions about the integrated urban air toxics strategy, contact Laura McKelvey at (919) 541-5497.

- ◆ EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's home page on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the air pollution programs including air toxics issues. The Office of Air and Radiation's home page address is: *<http://www.epa.gov/oar>*